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# THE BRIDAL.

BY J. SHERIDAN KNOWLES.



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Recruiting Sergeant  
Are—He's Much to



# THE BRIDAL.

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY JAMES S. KNOWLES.



## Dramatis Personæ.

[See page 16.]

First performed June 26th, 1837.

JANES, King of Rhodes ... ..	Mr. Haines	ASSASSIN ... ..	Mr. Andrews.
LANTIVS ... ..	Mr. Macready.	DION ... ..	Mr. Bishop.
INTOR ... ..	Mr. Elton.		
IPPUS, brother to the king ...	Mr. Saville.	EVADNE, wife to Amintor ...	Miss Huddart.
HILUS, brother of Melatius		ASPATIA, formerly betrothed to	
and Evadne ... ..	Mr. J. Webster.	Amintor ... ..	Miss Taylor.
ON ... ..	Mr. Worrell.	ANTIPHILA, lady attendant of	
IANAX, kinsman to Aspatia ...	Mr. Selby.	Aspatia ... ..	Miss E. Phillips.
HAS, keeper of the prison ...	Mr. Gough.	CLEANTHE, ditto ... ..	Miss Wrihten.
ATO ... ..	Mr. Harris.	OLYMPIAS, ditto ... ..	Miss Gallot.
GORAS ... ..	Mr. Hart,	DULA, ditto ... ..	Mrs. Humby.

## COSTUME.

**ARCANES.**—Yellow satin shirt, richly ornamented with various coloured stones. Crimson satin cloak, white silk stocking-pantaloons, black velvet sandal-shoes, gold band round the head.

**MELANTIUS.**—Blue shirt, thickly covered with silver studs, with crimson sleeves, and cap and cloak to match, flesh leggings, and russet sandal-shoes.

**AMINTOR.**—White kerseymere shirt, slashed with blue satin and trimmed with silver, cap and feathers, white silk stocking-pantaloons, and white sandal-shoes.

**LYSIPPUS.** Purple embroidered shirt, the sleeves slashed with yellow satin, white silk stocking-pantaloons, black-violet sandal shoes, and cap and feathers.

**DIPHILUS.**—Blue velvet shirt spotted with gold stars, cloak and cap to match. Blue silk stocking-pantaloons, and sandal-shoes.

**CLEON.**—Light green embroidered shirt and cloak, white silk stocking-pantaloons, and white sandal-shoes.

**CALIANAX.**—Scarlet embroidered shirt, scarlet stocking-pantaloons, cap to match, and black velvet sandal-shoes.

**ARCHAS.**—Brown shirt trimmed with black, brown leggings, and black sandal-shoes.

**STRATO.**—Puce merino shirt, and black velvet cloak, trimmed with gold, white silk stocking-pantaloons, and white sandal-shoes.

**ASSASSIN.**—Crimson shirt, steel breastplate and helmet, flesh leggings, and russet sandal-shoes.

**DION.**—*Ibid.*

**EVADNE.**—1st. dress: White satin richly trimmed with silver fringe, wreath of white and silver flowers. 2nd. dress: White muslin and lace veil.

**ASPATIA.**—1st. dress: White muslin. 2nd. dress: Orange merino shirt, with large white merino sleeves trimmed with blue; white silk stocking-pantaloons, and sandal-shoes

**ANTIPHILA.**—White muslin edged with rose-coloured muslin.

**CLEANTHE.**—White muslin.

**OLYMPIAS.**—White muslin edged with black and rose-coloured muslin.

**DULA.**—Yellow silk, trimmed with black.

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## STAGE DIRECTIONS.

**EXITS AND ENTRANCES.**—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*; L. U. E. *Left Upper Entrance*; R. U. E. *Right Upper Entrance*; L. S. E. *Left Second Entrance* P. S. *Prompt Side* O. P. *Opposite Prompt*.

**RELATIVE POSITIONS.**—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*.

R.                      R.C.                      C.                      L.C.                      L.

••• The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.

# THE BRIDAL.

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A room in Aspatia's house; a large window, centre opening upon a balcony overlooking the city; a door S. E. R. half open; an empty chair in centre, on which is a lute; ANTIPHILA is discovered, employed on a large piece of embroidery, L. Above her, on L., a lady painting. On R., a table, at which are seated DULA, OLYMPIAS, and another lady, at work on a tambour-frame, with a vase of flowers on a stand before them. Above them, on R., two ladies with needlework. Distant shouts, laughter, and music.*

Dula. Good faith, I'm weary of this task! To sit thus moping, while the whole city rings with mirth,

And, save ourselves, each maiden twines within Her hair the flowers, we must be fain to toil at!

(*Music, and laughter.*)

Nothing but music and merry voices, since The sun rose. Antiphila, must we sit here till night!

Ant. If it be our lady's will, I have no wish To cross it: e'en in her happier days I never would; now in her sorrows I'd Rather die than do it.

Dula. Oh, so would I,  
And all of us;—and I'd sit patient, nor Think of a masque or show. (*Music, and laughter.*)

Hark! how it sets  
One's spirits bounding! I declare, Antiphila,  
I cannot hold my needle; my fingers are Quite weary.

Oly. But thy feet would move as nimbly  
In the happy dance, as the wild pulses of Thy heart itself!

Dula. May we not send to ask  
The sudden cause of these new revels?

Ant. What  
Is it to us?

Dula. To us?—I'd give the world  
To know! (*Shouts, laughter, and music.*) Again!—

Oh, let us take a look

At least, Antiphila, on the gay scene!

Ant. Dula, for shame! sit still.

Dula. Well; if I may not  
Even by look or word humour my curious  
Appetite, I may at least make harmony  
At home with the gay minstrels, that I hear  
Abroad; and I will do so. Now Olympias—

Ant. Ah, happy girl! would that thou couldst instil

Some of thy mirth into Aspatia!

Dula. She is in love; hang me, if I were so  
But I could run my country. Where's the lute?—  
Tell me, Antiphila, if e'er you heard  
A merrier strain than this?

ASPATIA sings without, S. E. R.

SONG.

"Lay a garland on my hearse  
Of the dismal yew;  
Maidens, will no branches bear,  
Say, I died true;  
My love was false, but I was firm  
From my hour of birth;  
Upon my buried body lie  
Lightly, gentle earth?"

(*Dula puts the lute down on table, R. and returns mournfully to her seat.*)

Oly. It is our lady!—

Ant. Yes; sweet lady!—sec,  
See, if she has not spoil'd all Dula's mirth!

(*Shouts, laughter, and music.*)

Enter CALIANAX, R.

Cal. Know ye what makes this uproar thro' the city?

Ant. We have not heard, my lord.

Cal. My fears guess at it!  
They said Aspatia was here.

Ant. Not long  
Ago she left us; as I think,  
To hide the tears, that swelled into her eyes,  
When thoughtless Dula in her idle vein,  
Talked of the young Amintor.

Cal. Curses on him!  
The traitor! Does she still feed her sad humour?

Ant. Yes; she is heart-stricken  
Her watery eyes are ever bent to earth.  
She carries with her an infectious grief,  
That strikes all her beholders. She will sing  
The mournfull'st things, that ever ear hath heard  
And sigh and sing again; and when the rest  
Of our young ladies, in their happy moods,  
Tell mirthful tales in course, she will bring forth  
A story of the silent death of some  
Forsaken virgin in such phrase, and with  
So sad a look, that ere she end, alas!  
She'll send them weeping one by one away.  
See, where she sits, as she were turned to marble!

Cal. My poor cousin! a feller blow, than that  
Which struck thy heart, was never dealt by man!  
The breath of kings should be like that of gods,  
Healing and not destroying, but its foul taint  
Has withered all thy hopes. (*Music, and shouting.*)

This merriment  
And music jar like discord on my vexed  
Spirit. Antiphila, try thy best skill  
To soothe thy mistress' sadness, while I learn  
The strange event that stirs this revelry.  
I will return forthwith.

[*Exit Calianax, L.*]

Ant. 'Tis all in vain;



Words have lost power upon a grief like hers.  
She comes.—

Enter ASPATIA, door 3. E. R. Her dress neglected,  
and her hair loose upon her shoulders. She sinks  
into chair, c.

Dear lady—dear Aspatia. Speak.  
To her, Dula.

Dula. Madam, 'tis holiday  
To-day, for all the city; be it so  
To your sad thoughts, and make it so to us  
By one sweet smile.

Asp. It were a timeless smile should prove my  
cheek;

It were a fitter hour for me to laugh,  
When, at the altar, the religious priest  
Were pacifying the offended heavens  
With sacrifice, than now.—This should have been  
My bridal day, and all your hands employed  
In giving me a spotless offering  
To young Amintor's bed!

Ant. Leave this talk, madam.

Asp. Would I could, then should I leave the  
cause.

Did you ne'er love, my girls? tell me, Olympias.

Oly. Never.

Asp. Nor you, Antiphila?

Ant. Nor I.

Asp. Then, my good girls, be more than women  
wise;

At least, be more than I was; and be sure  
You credit anything the light gives light to  
Before a man. Rather believe the sea  
Weeps for the ruined merchant, when he roars;  
Rather, the wind courts but the pregnant sails,  
When the strong cordage cracks; rather, the  
sun

Comes but to kiss the fruit in wealthy autumn,  
When all falls blasted.

(Rises and walks about.)

Perhaps he believed me worthless!

But, till he did so, in these ears of mine,

These credulous ears, he pour'd the sweetest  
word

That art or love could frame. No more—no  
more.

Show me the piece of needlework you wrought.

Ant. Of Ariadne, madam?

Asp. Yes, that piece.

Ant. 'Tis here.

(Showing embroidery, L.)

Asp. This is Theseus? he's a coz'ning face.

Is it not he?

Ant. Yes, madam.

Asp. 'Tis well done.

But where is Ariadne?

Ant. There, madam.

Asp. Oh, you have missed it there, Antiphila;

These colours are not dull and pale enough

To show a soul so full of misery,

As this sad lady's was. Do it by me;

Do it again—by me, the lost Aspatia.

Suppose I stand upon the sea-beach now;

Mine arms thus, and mine hair blown with the  
wind,

Wild as that desert, and let all about me

Tell, that I am forsaken. Do my face

(If thou had'st ever feeling of a sorrow)

Like, thus, Antiphila. Strive to make me look  
Thus sorrow's monument; and the trees about  
me,

Let them be dry and leafless; let the rocks

Groan with continual surges; and, behind me,

Make all a desolation! Look, Antiphila;  
A miserable life of this poor picture!

Ant. Dear Madam!

Asp. I have done.

(Sinks into chair, c.)

(Sings.)—"Tell him, should he chance to chide,  
That it was for him I died."

Enter CALIANAX, L.

Asp. Alas! poor lady!

Cal. (Crosses to R.) It is a tyrant's will—

A traitor's deed; coward no less than traitor!

Why stay ye here? Why join ye not the throng  
Of fools and knaves, that, with most courtly  
mirth,

Shout, laugh, and frisk, as a king wills they  
should?

Ant. It is our lady's pleasure, we are here

Cal. Go, get you in—my passion speaks before  
My better thought; go, good Antiphila,

(Crossing to Antiphila.)

And ply your tasks within.

[Exeunt ladies, R. door 3 E.]

Aspatia, listen.

I have that to speak calls for your best atten-  
tion.

Asp. My kind cousin, what would you say to  
me?

Cal. Dry up your tears. Aspatia! oh, my  
tongue

Can scarce give utterance to the news, I come  
To speak.

Asp. I know it all.

Cal. Who was the officious

Fool that blabbed it to thee?

Asp. A fool indeed,

A fond, believing fool—my heart—Calianax;

That practised faith so long, it has learnt at  
last

Even to trust its fears. Amintor weds

To-day!

Cal. Would it be denied, or hid—  
From thee!

By the king's own command (his heralds

Trumpet it in every street), Amintor

Weds Evadne.

But to the world, even at the altar, 'fore

Himself and his affianced minions,

Thy wrongs and innocence shall be proclaimed,

Though I pull down my death upon my head.

Asp. And add another to my many griefs?

I have enough without thy help, dear cousin.

Cal. Too much, poor girl; my very heart weeps  
with thee.

Asp. Then I will weep no more; for if I do,  
You shall not see me, cousin. I have a thought,  
That kindles here like hope, to steel me 'gainst  
This weakness. Will you attend me?

Cal. Whither?

Asp. To the court.

Cal. The court! what have you found it,

But a place privileged to do men wrong?

What would you there?—Where is your pride?—  
your shame?

Asp. I ne'er knew shame, save of ill thoughts;  
nor pride,

If prond I ever was, but of such shame.

I'd see the king—

Cal. Aspatia! that tyrant?

Asp. There's doubt and fear in thy fixed gaze, my  
friend;



I am not mad;—come with me to the king.  
 All that in life I'd keep, even the wish  
 To live, alas! I lost with my Amintor;  
 In my death  
 I would not my fair name were cast away!  
 Come to the king; (*crosses to L.*) my misery so  
     sets me  
 Above all fear, that even him I most  
 Should fear, and shudder at, I now can coldly  
 Look on; come, Calianax, your presence  
 Must support me;—I have no ear for counsel,  
 Come, dear cousin!

[*Exeunt L.*]SCENE II.—*A Hall in the King's Palace.**Enter KING and STRATO, L.**King.* These things are done?*Str.* They are.*King.* Run't o'er again:

What circumstance of state have we omitted,  
 Which, in our love to young Amintor, ought  
 To grace his wedding-day?

*Str.* The preparations  
 Are full, my lord, and high, as were yourself  
 About to lead a bride.

*King.* I'd have them so. (*Crosses to L.*)  
 It was proclaimed a holiday?

*Str.* It was.

And will be held as such. The citizens  
 Keep closed shops; and one and all prepare  
 To make their houses gay. Already some  
 Hang out their cloths, of bright and vary'd dyes;  
 Some their festoons of flowers, their banners some.  
 The streets are throng'd with happy looks, boys,  
     girls,

And men and women, by your grace set free,  
 And ready for rejoicing.

*King.* Have they prepar'd, ere moves the cavalcade,

An ample shower of roses, to disperse  
 Among the waiting crowd?

*Str.* They have, my liege.*King.* And coin to scatter as we pace along?*Str.* They have.

*King.* 'Tis well. My harness have they stuck  
 With white rosettes, as I directed?

*Str.* Yes.

*King.* 'Tis well; 'tis very well. And to my  
     coach

Have they prepared to yoke my finest steeds?  
 I would be chief

In doing honour to the nuptial day,  
 That weds Amintor.

*Str.* Turn where your highness may,  
 You shall not see that faulty thing, wherein  
 Your pleasure's not reflected.

*King.* Bravely done;  
 Go, and inspect my body guard. (*Strato crosses be-*  
     *hind to R.*) I'll have

About me nought,  
 That does not look and speak a lusty joy  
 To give Amintor greeting.

[*Exit Strato, R.*]

Yes, Amintor,  
 Thy joy is mine—if that be joy to thee.  
 For that I blasted thy Aspatia's name,  
 And feign'd a thriving suit, whose suit did fail,  
 My love held cheap for thine.—Yet not my love—  
 That was, and is another's. Rather 'twas  
 Hate for the manly graces, which betwixt

Me and my pleasures stand; and give thee sway  
 Where chief I'd boast to reign.

*Enter DION, R.*

*Dion.* The fair Aspatia  
 Entreats an audience of your highness.

*King.* Who?*Dion.* The fair Aspatia.*King.* Straight admit her.[*Exit Dion, R.*]

How?  
 Aspatia crave an audience!—She that from  
 My court withdrew herself—repulsed my visits—  
 My costly presents spurn'd!—What brings her?—  
     Woman,

"On slights finds nature in her, which before  
 She never dreamed she own'd—perceives attrac-  
     tion

In arms she shunn'd, shut out from those she  
     sought."—

My heart, more quickly that performs its function  
 At mention of her visit, says she's welcome!—  
 'Tis not her beauty—'tis the chariness,  
 With which she hoards it, that I'd master.—She,  
 Second in place to many in my court,  
 In person, too, surpass'd by more than one,  
 In pride of chastity takes lead of all.—  
 Gods! but she's humbled, when she stoops to  
     crave

An audience of me;—me!—'gainst whom her door  
 An hundred times she shut!—To pay me visit!—  
 Fresh from her toilet, doubtless;—nor before  
 She turn'd her back—and went—and turn'd again  
 For warrant of her mirror.—Now, to see  
 The wonders of her wardrobe, beauty's arsenal,  
 Wherefrom it arms itself for conquest!

*Enter ASPATIA and CALIANAX, R.*

How!

Is it Aspatia that I look upon?

*Asp.* If thou can'st read a sorrow in mine eye,  
 Complexion, form—deep, melancholy, clear,  
 Wherein do lie a maiden's drowned hopes,  
 Pride, peace, rank, fortune, youth—say life itself,  
 It is.—If not, why then it is a stone,  
 And not Aspatia that thou look'st upon.

*King.* How she persuades my vision!—Sweetly  
     doth

Affliction dress her!—Sweetly!—It doth well  
 To take the gaudy rose away, and leave  
 Nought but the lily!—She becomes it!—Well,  
 To quench her sparkling eyes, which now, like dew  
 In cups of flowers of amaranthine dye,  
 Shine weepingly.—Who's that?—Calianax!  
 What dost thou here, Calianax?

*Cal.* Attend

Upon my kinswoman.

*King.* Attendants wait

Without! Hence!—Leave us!

*Cal.* By her wish I stay.

*King.* 'Tis mine thou go!—Art thou assistant to  
 Our conference?—Art thou her tongue?—her eye?  
 Her thought? her wish, she cannot do without?  
 Well?

*Cal.* I'm her kinsman, sir.*King.* And I'm her king

And thine, though thou wert fifty kinsmen to her  
 Dost thou withdraw? (*Crosses to Calianax.*)—Dost  
     hear me?—In a word.

She speaks with me alone, or not at all.

*Asp.* Leave us, Calianax.*King.* He does not well

To know our will, and dally in the doing on't!  
Thou heardest!—Thou art dismiss'd—Thy kins-  
woman  
Gives thee thy leave.—Thou dost intrude on her,  
If not upon thy king.  
*Cal.* My liege, I heard  
My kinswoman.

[*Exit Calianax, R.*]

*King.* Hadst thou a boon to ask,  
And he, of whom thou'dst ask it, sought excuse  
To meet thee with denial, lady, he  
Had found it in thy friend.

*Asp.* A boon, my lord.  
I come to ask. O king, (*kneeling*) be just to me;  
Or, if not just, be merciful to me.  
Thy breath hath killed my virgin name;—thy  
breath

Can give it life again;—O, bid it live,—  
Ought it to die?—The body does not die,  
While lives the heart.—Thou know'st the heart of  
that

Is quick and healthful sound.—What thou  
averr'dst

To young Amintor, that inflicteth death,  
Where death ought not to be, unsay—deny,  
As said in jest, to wake his jealousy,  
Or try how deeply love had taken root  
In a young virgin's heart:—else, while the priest  
The proud Evadne makes Amintor's wife,  
Command the sexton dig a grave for me!

*King.* No more of this.  
What kin art thou to death?—Death hath not  
blood!—

His veins are empty—thine are full.—His flesh  
Is cold—and thine is warm.—His heart is still—  
Thine beats.—He's loathsome, and life shrinks  
from him—

Thou'rt sightly, sweet, and life doth cling to  
thee.—

What is Amintor?—Body, face, and limbs,  
Senses, thoughts, feelings, are not his alone,  
But properties as well of other men.  
Believ'st thou, hearts of flesh can wish but once?

*Asp.* (*Starting up.*) So please your highness, this  
is not my suit.

*King.* 'Tis mine—and more will serve thee than  
thine own.

*Asp.* My liege,  
Pray you vouchsafe an answer to my suit.

*King.* Thou should'st be mistress to a king,  
Aspatia!

*Asp.* I'd rather be a suitor, that did thrive.

*King.* Thou should'st be mistress to a king, I say.

*Asp.* Not a king's wife, that lack'd a kingly  
heart;

Nor wife of him, that own'd one, save he were  
The monarch of my soul. (*Crosses to R.*)

*King.* Hear me, Aspatia!  
What's gold, that will not bring the worth of gold?  
What is a gem, which you do know is one,  
And yet the lapidary's skill condemns,  
That none will take it a jewel's price?—  
As good a bead of glass!—I see thou'lt list  
To reason. Hear me, sweet Aspatia!

Rightly thou saidst, my breath, that kill'd thy  
fame,

Can make it live again; and it shall do it.  
Look, as thou prompt'st, I'll act.—I'll say—in  
jest—

To move Amintor's jealousy—prove thee—  
Or compass any other end, within  
The range of likelihood—I own'd thee kind,

When to that maid-forbidden mansion, thou  
Unwittingly wer't lur'd.—Note further—this  
Is fair Evadne's wedding-day—a word.  
Shall change it into thine. An hour gone by,  
Amintor leads her to the altar—there  
Aspatia takes her place.—Thou mark'st?—Thy  
name.

No sooner clear'd, and bright, as e'er it was,  
Than for a brighter one exchang'd—the wife  
Of young Amintor! Now, Aspatia,  
Husbands, that hedge you in, do screen you too.  
Aspatia, women I can name you, who  
As wives are charitable, yet, when maids,  
Were noted for a sordid penny.  
Dear maid, thy silence and thy downcast looks  
Are words and glances, that talk transport to  
me!

It lacks an hour; now, give me only earnest  
That such a wife, as I have named, Amintor  
Will find in thee, and be Amintor's bride.  
Thou hear'st me? Well! thou understand'st me?  
Well!

Nay, if my tongue imperfect speaks the wish,  
Let my knee tell it thee, Aspatia. (*Kneels.*)

*Asp.* Thou slave!

*King.* What say'st thou?

*Asp.* Art thou not a slave?

An abject, pitiful, and loathsome slave!  
That to thy grov'ling passions stoop'st to kneel!  
Nay, keep thy posture still, thou vicious man,  
That wouldst a pander make of honour's hand.  
Thou ruthless man! that, when I came in woe  
To sue to thee, as I'd ask Heaven for help,  
(Oh! most unlike to heaven!) to get my prayer  
Wouldst have me damn my soul! Nay, rise not  
yet

Bring to its knee the sin, that bent thy knee,  
And then stand up a king! (*The King rises.*)

Heaven is my witness,  
That I, thy subject, and the slander'd maid,  
Slander'd by thee, to thee, my king, in vain  
Applied to do me right; so thou repaid'st  
The grace of heaven's anointing! Fare thee  
well.

[*Exit Aspatia, R.*]

*King.* Perverse and shallow maid!

*Enter STRATO, R.*

*Str.* Good news, my liege,  
Melantius' gallant fleet is hove in sight!  
Moreover, by a vessel of swift sail,  
Despatch'd before him, and just now arrived,  
We learn he brings you victory. Much joy  
To your highness!

*King.* Thank you.

[*Exit Strato, R.*]

Better that defeat  
Had held him where he was!—He is a man  
To read a troubled look; and, right or wrong,  
Find out the cause on't. He is reckless honest;  
A man, who to respect, must have a reason;  
Who measures all by honour—full of action—  
Of courage too, that heeds not what it faces!  
A nature which I loathe. He loves his sister—  
Amintor too!—Why comes he at this time?  
I thought to better purpose 'twas, I held  
His promis'd succours back! But let him come,  
Monarchs are many-handed men! We'll find  
A way to deal with him, should he prove fro-  
ward!

[*Exit King, R.*]



## ACT II.

SCENE I. — *A magnificent hall in Amintor's palace: At the back a large arch, behind which a rich drapery conceals the preparations for the masque; two thrones with canopies, one 2 E. R., the other 2 E. L. STRATO, L. CLEON, R. and four attendants busied in arranging the apartment. Shouts of laughter heard without.*

Str. (L.) All seem so mad with riot, 'twould appear,  
The very craftsmen had a kindred share  
In young Amintor's joy. (*Shouts of laughter.*) The world is craz'd!  
See to the minstrels and the masquers! (*two attendants exeunt, L.*) for all faults  
The king will rail at us!  
(*Without, L.*) Room for the prince!

*Enter LYSIPPUS and two lords.*

Lys. Where is the Lord Melantius? Not yet Ashore?

Str. No, my good lord:—

Lys. Despatch more messengers.—  
Let torches blaze along the beach to light  
Him here; his great service would make poor our  
Fullest welcome.—

(*Exeunt two attendants, L.*)

Str. Bring you no tidings from  
The temple, prince?—'Tis now the only question.

Lys. I left Amintor and Evadne there  
Before the altar; as the sacred priest  
Held their joined hands in his,—  
Blushing with eyes downcast, the lovers stood  
Like the bright vision of an angel's dream,  
Called by some god to life. Oh! may the knot  
That they this night have tied, last, till the hand  
Of age undo it! (*Shouts without, L.*)

Cle. The king!—Make ready there!

Str. No;—look, my lord, who 'tis, that is return'd  
(*Shouts without, L.*)

*Enter MELANTIUS and two lords, L.*

Lys. Noble Melantius! the land, by me,  
Welcomes thy virtues home.—But the time gives thee

A welcome above mine, or all the world's.  
Mel. My lord, my thanks;—but these scratch'd  
limbs of mine

Have spoke my truth and love unto my friends,  
More than my tongue e'er could.—My mind's the same

It ever was to you; where I find worth,  
I love the keeper, till he let it go,  
And then I follow it.

*Enter DIPHILUS, L.*

Dip. Hail, worthiest brother!  
He that rejoices not at your return  
In safety, is mine enemy for ever.

Mel. I thank thee, Diphilus! But thou art faulty.

I sent for thee to exercise thine arms  
With me at Patria; thou can'st not Diphilus;  
'Twas ill.

Dip. My noble brother, my excuse  
Is my king's straight command; which you, my  
lord,

Can witness with me—

Lys. 'Tis true, Melantius.

He might not come, till the solemnity  
Of this great match was past.

Mel. And for these gauds,  
The succours to relieve my fainting soldiers  
Were kept at home! (*Aside.*)

Lys. We have a masque to-night;  
And you must tread a soldier's measure.

Mel. These soft and silken wars are not for me.  
But is Amintor wed?

Dip. This very night.  
They come now from the Temple.—I hear their music!

Mel. All joys upon him! for he is my friend.  
Wonder not, that I call a man so young my friend.  
His worth is great; valiant he is, and temperate,  
And one that never thinks his life his own,  
If his friend need it.—When he was a boy,  
And I return'd from battle, he'd gaze on me,  
And view me round, to find in what one limb  
The virtue lay, to do those things he heard.—  
Then would he wish to see my sword, and feel  
The quickness of its edge, and in his hand  
Weigh it:—he oft would make me smile at this.  
His youth did promise much, and his ripe years  
Will see it all performed.—Blessings be on him  
And his fair bride, Aspatia!

Lys. You're mistaken!

For she is not married.

Mel. You said Amintor was.

Dip. 'Tis true, but—

Mel. Pardon me, I did receive  
Letters at Patria from my Amintor,  
That he should marry her.

Lys. And so it stood  
In all opinion long; but your arrival  
Made me imagine you had heard the change.

Mel. Whom hath he taken then?

Lys. A lady, sir,  
That bears the light above her:—fair Evadne,  
Your virtuous sister.

Mel. Peace of heart betwixt them!  
But this is strange!

Lys. The king, my brother, did it;  
Partly, for that foul rumours touched the fame  
Of sad Aspatia, but his chief purpose was  
To honour you; and these solemnities  
Are at his charge.

Mel. 'Tis royal, like himself. But I am grieved  
To think, that aught unfortunate should bear  
On beautiful Aspatia.

(*Crossing to R., distant music heard, L.*)

Dip. Hark! they're coming  
From the temple.—See—their torches flash a day  
About them!

(*Melantius, Lysippus, and Diphilus retire to R. corner.*)

(*Without, L.*) Room there, make room!

Minstrels, virgins, and nobles enter in procession,  
preceding AMINTOR, EVADNE, and the KING;  
they fill up the back of the stage.

## CHORUS OF YOUTHS AND VIRGINS.

*Fairest goddess, queen of loves,  
Soft and gentle as thy doves,  
Beauteous mother of delights,  
Happy days and happier nights,  
Ever young, and golden tressed,  
Be this fair for ever blessed!*

Lys. My lord, the bridegroom!

Mel. I might run fiercely, not more hastily,  
Upon my foe.—I love thee well, Amintor:—



I joy to look upon those eyes of thine:  
Thou art my friend—but my disordered speech  
Cuts off my love.

*Ami* Thou art *Melantius*:

All love is spoke in that. *Melantius*  
Returns in safety! Victory sits on thy sword  
As she was wont. May she build there and dwell,  
And may thy armour be, as it hath been,  
Only thy valour and thy innocence!

*Mel.* I'm but poor in words—

*King.* (Crossing to him.) *Melantius*, here are  
friends impatient

To claim right in thee.

*Mel.* My sovereign! (Kneels.)

*King.* (Raising and embracing him.) Thou'rt wel-  
come; and my love is with thee still.

*Mel.* (Crossing to her.) Sister, I joy to see you,  
and your choice:

You looked with my eyes, when you took that  
man;

Be happy in him!

*Eva.* Oh, my dearest brother!

Your presence is more joyful than this day  
Can be unto me.

Enter *STRATO*, c.

*Str.* (R.) Sir, the masquers wait  
Your bidding.

*King.* *Amintor*, you are monarch  
Of the night—dispense your own commands.

*Ami.* Let them attend. (The *King* goes to throne,  
L., and sits. *Strato*, having given directions, comes  
to the side of the *King*, with *Lysippus* and *Diphilus*.)  
We shall but trouble you  
With our solemnities.

(Leading *Evadne* to throne, R., placing  
her nearest the audience.)

*Mel.* Not so, *Amintor*:

But if you laugh at my rude carriage  
In peace, I'll do as much for you in war,  
When you come thither. One word with you.

(*Amintor* advances R.) I fear  
Thou art grown fickle, and that *Aspatia*  
Mourns, forsaken of thee—on what terms I know  
not.

*Ami.* 'Tis true, she had my promise and my  
love;

Heaven knows my grief to lose her; but the  
*King*,

On secret motives touching her fair fame,

Forbad our union, and made me make.

This worthy change, thy sister, accompanied  
With graces far above her.

*Mel.* Be prosperous!

(The minstrels, virgins, and nobles retire  
on each side. The curtains are with-  
drawn, and discover, variously  
grouped, the heathen deities, *Flora*  
and *Vermunus*, L., *Thetis* and *Triton*,  
c., *Ceres* and *Pan*, R., *Apollo* and  
*Diana* above c., with their symbols.)

Dance of attendant nymphs to the following  
chorus:—

All dear Nature's children sweet  
Lay at the bride and bridegroom's feet,  
To grace this happy night;  
Richest gem the waters yield,  
Fairest flowers of the field  
Every treasure,  
Every pleasure,

Crown your days with fresh delight!

If there be a joy yet new

In marriage, let it fall on you!

(After laying at the feet of *Evadne* and  
*Amintor* emblematic gifts, they retire  
within the arch, and are closed in by  
the drapery as they form themselves  
into a group.)

*King.* (Rising.) A thanks to everyone.—Good  
night, *Amintor*,

And fair *Evadne*;—we'll ease you of more

Tedious ceremony.—Attend the bride

With all due honours, ladies. (Coming down L. c.)

*Eva.* Happiness

Be with my sovereign lord!

[*Exeunt Evadne and ladies.*]

*King.* *Melantius*,

We must not part; our banquet would be poor,

And the full goblet, though to love upraised,

Want its diviner spirit without thee

To do our revels honour.—Once more welcome!

Joy and good night, *Amintor*!

*Mel.* (To *Amintor*.) Could I love thee

More, thou'st given me cause to do so—

But I cannot;—my blessing rest with thee!

*King.* Thy hand, *Melantius*.—Come—

[*Exeunt King and Melantius*, L.]

*Ami.* Much happiness unto you all—my friends,  
good night!

[*Exeunt all but Amintor*, L.]

Would I could ease this fulness of the heart,

That almost aches with its excess of bliss!

Teach me, ye gods, to thank you, as I ought,

For all this store of blessings, never yet

In one man's lot poured with such boundless good-  
ness!

I am too happy—

(*Aspatia* enters through drapery, c.)

*Asp.* At last he is alone—

My—my lord

(Comes down R.)

*Amintor*—

*Ami.* Heavens! *Aspatia*—Madam—*Aspatia*—I!

What would you—speak your will, madam;—  
prithce

Keep in thy tears.

*Asp.* They flow despite of me;

I thought that I had wept them quite away,

For since we parted, it has been my only

Solace to weep and think of you.

*Ami.* How cam'st

Thou hither?—I would not have men see thee—

*Asp.* Oh! let them gaze—for human agony's

A favourite spectacle; and 'tis no sight

Of common suffering, they'd come to look on here.

Long hours I've watched in patient torture for  
thee—

*Ami.* Thou dost awake feelings that trouble me,  
And say, "I lov'd thee once." I dare not stay.

*Asp.* A moment yet, my lord;—'tis the last time

You ever may behold me.—If you were

False to me—

*Ami.* *Aspatia*!—false!—

*Asp.* Nay, I accuse

You not;—but if you were, forgive it, Heaven!

And may its pardon reach even his perjured soul.

Who causelessly has laid griefs on me, that

Will never let me rest!—My errand at

This hour is—to look once again upon you;

And to give to your own hands this paper—

'Tis a prayer you'll not deny, if I dare trust

A hope, that once deceived me.

*Ami.* Wrong me not ;—  
If it be aught that may content thee, and  
In honour may be given, receive my promise ;—  
And begone :—*Aspatia*, leave me, for  
Beholding thee, I am, I know not what.

*Asp.* I'll trouble you no more ! *(Crosses to L.)*  
Go, and be happy in your lady's love !  
May discontent ne'er grow 'twixt her and you,  
May all the wrongs, that you have done to me  
Be utterly forgotten in my death !  
Still I am prouder, prouder far  
To have been once your love, though now refused,  
Than to have had another true to me.  
So with my prayers I leave you, and must try  
Some yet unpractised way to grieve and die.

*[Exit, L.]*

*Ami.* Her sorrow strikes my heart :—methinks I  
feel

Her grief shoot suddenly through all my veins.  
I fear she has suffered wrong !—But why perplex  
Myself ?—The king was her accuser, and  
With vouch of her inconstancy, forced me  
To break my troth ! what says her suit ? *(Reads.)*  
“ My tongue shall pray for your happiness, though  
mine eyes refuse to witness it. I carry my sorrows  
far from you, and in my farewells commend  
to your care a brother, whom too much love for  
you has bereft of a sister's protection.—Be to  
him what you would have been, had you never  
doubted my truth, and when you find it spotless,  
requite him with the kindness owed to me, the  
lost *Aspatia*. ”

Unhappy girl !—He shall be ever near me,  
The inmate of my home and of my heart.  
My soul sinks down within me ; the light spirit,  
Erewhile that lifted me from earth, is turned  
To dullest lead ;—No, no :—the messenger of love  
Appears to chase the shadows, that e'er cloud  
My joy.

*Enter CLEANTHE, R.*

Thou need'st not speak thy errand ;  
I know thou com'st, *Cleanthe*, to accuse  
Me as a heedless spendthrift of rich time—

*Cle.* My duty, sir—

*Ami.* Oh ! what a tone and look for *Hymen's*  
herald !

A lip without a smile on such a night  
Is a bad omen. I'll not listen to thee. *(Going.)*

*Cle.* My lord

*Amintor*, stay ; your bride *Evadne*,  
Waits you in the library.

*Ami.* What dost say ?

*Cle.* She wishes there to see you ;—The noblest  
Ladies, selected by the king to do  
Her grace, she has dismissed, and unattended sits  
In pensive mood, waiting your presence there.

*Ami.* What coy device is this ?—*Evadne* ?—Ha !  
Does sickness weigh upon her ?—is she ill ?

*Cle.* My lord—

*Ami.* My lord ?—My life hangs on a word,  
Thou seest me suffer, yet prolong'st my pain,  
To flatter me with forms ; away, I cannot  
Stop to question thee—*Evadne* ! my *Evadne* !—

*[Exit, R.]*

SCENE II.—*The library of Amintor ; a door,  
U. E. R., half open ; EVADNE discovered, and  
seated at table, with light on it, L. X. S.*

*Eva.* Was't not a step ? *(Rising.)*—No ;—there  
has been scarcely

Time to give my message ; *(brings down chair)* but  
the fretful wish  
Still lengthens out the time it would o'erleap.—  
I hear his rapid foot upon the stair !—  
'Tis he ! *(Sits, L.)*

*Enter AMINTOR, door U. E. R.*

*Ami.* *Evadne* ! let me look upon thee !—  
Thank Heaven, my fears were false : health's  
roseate blush  
Still decks thy lovely cheek, and those bright eyes  
Can blot all sad remembrance far away.—  
But, dear *Evadne*, spare thy tender body ;  
The vapours of the night may reach thee here :—  
And did thy thoughtful fondness send to chide  
me ?

*Eva.* No.

*Ami.* My best love : why art thou up so long ?

*Eva.* I am not well.

*Ami.* Repose will banish sickness.

*Eva.* My lord, I cannot sleep :—nay—were my  
couch

The single spot on earth, where I could hope  
For rest, I would not seek it there.

*Ami.* And why,

Dear love ?

*Eva.* Why ?—I have sworn I will not—

*Ami.* Sworn, *Evadne* !

*Eva.* Yes, sworn, *Amintor* ; and will swear  
again,

If you will wish to hear me.

*Ami.* I'd hear no

Oaths, but those of love from thee.

*Eva.* Of love from me ?—

*Ami.* How prettily that frown becomes thee !

*Eva.* Do you like it so ?

*Ami.* Thou can'st not dress thy face in such a  
look,

But I must like it.

*Eva.* What look likes you best ?

*Ami.* Why do you ask ?

*Eva.* That I may show you one less pleasing to  
you.

*Ami.* How's that ?

*Eva.* That I may show you one less pleasing to  
you.

*Ami.* I prithee put thy jests in milder looks ;  
It shows as thou wert angry.

*Eva.* So perhaps

I am indeed.

*Ami.* Why ? who hast done thee wrong ?

Name me the man, and by thyself I swear

Thy yet unconquered self, I will revenge thee !

*Eva.* *(Standing up.)* Now I shall try thy truth.—  
If thou dost love me

Thou weigh'st not anything compared with me ;—

Life, honour, joys eternal, all delights

This world can yield, or hopeful people feign,—

Or in the life to come, are light as air

To a true lover, when his lady frowns,

And bids him “ do this.”—Wilt thou kill this  
man ?

Swear, *Amintor* !

*Ami.* I will not swear, sweet love,

Till I do know the cause.

*Eva.* I would thou would'st !

Why, it is thou that wrong'st me :—I hate thee !

Thou should'st have killed thyself ! *(Crosses to R.)*

*Ami.* If I should know that, I should quickly  
kill

The man you hated.

*Eva.* Know it then, and do't.



*Ami.* (*Looking at her.*) Oh, no :—what looks so'er  
 thou shalt put on,  
 To try my faith, I shall not think thee false :  
 I cannot find one blemish in thy face,  
 Where falsehood should abide.—This cannot be  
 Thy natural temper!

*Eva.* Put off amazement, and with patience  
 mark

What I shall utter: 'tis not for this night  
 Alone I've sworn to our divorce—it is  
 For ever!

*Ami.* Great Heaven! I dream!

*Eva.* You hear right!  
 I sooner will find out the beds of snakes,  
 And with my youthful blood warm their cold  
 flesh,

Letting them curl themselves about my limbs,  
 Than break the oath I've sworn.—This is not  
 feigned,  
 Nor sounds it like the coyness of a bride.

(*Crosses to L.*)

*Ami.* Evadne!  
 What horrid fears rise sick'ning at my heart?  
 Art thou?—  
 She can but jest:—Oh! pardon me, my love!—  
 Yet satisfy my fear!  
 It is a pain beyond the hand of death  
 To be in doubt: confirm it with an oath,  
 If this be true.

*Eva.* Do you invent the form :—  
 Let there be in it all the binding words,  
 Demons and sorcerers can put together,  
 And I will take it.—I have sworn before,  
 And here, by all things holy, do again,  
 More than in name never to be thy wife!  
 Is your doubt over now?

(*Sits.*)

*Ami.* The only doubt, that e'er could shake my  
 soul,  
 Now makes my heart beat with a coward's motion;  
 What means this trembling o'er me?—There's a  
 cause,

For this, my honour shrinks to ask for, but  
 I'll know :—tell me—tell me—  
 Or by those hairs—which, if thou hadst a soul  
 Like to thy locks, were threads for kings to wear  
 About their arms—

*Eva.* Indeed!

*Ami.* I'll drag thee to the earth, and make thy  
 tongue

Undo this wicked oath, or on thy flesh  
 I'll print a thousand wounds to let out life!

*Eva.* I fear thee not.—Do what thou dar'st,  
 Amintor!

Every ill-sounding word or threatening look,  
 Thon show'st to me, will be revenged at full.

*Ami.* Woman! Evadne?—Am I then so vile,  
 So poor of heart, thou dar'st to fling a threat  
 Into my face?—Where are your champions?—  
 where!

Set them before me.—Death! I stand and prate,  
 Holding a coward parley with such insult,  
 As taints the life of honour, sheds the blight  
 Of infamy upon my unstain'd name!  
 Give me to know the man, would wrong me thus,  
 And though his body were a poisonous plant,  
 That it was death to touch, I have a soul  
 Will throw me on him.

*Eva.* I've too much care of thine and my own  
 fame,

To drag a fate upon thee, would kill both.

*Ami.* Thou canst not be—The thought is madness  
 to me!

I am afraid, some sudden start will pull  
 A murder on me!

Ye powers above! if you did ever mean,  
 Man should be used thus, you have thought a way  
 How he may bear himself and save his honour :—  
 Instruct me in it; for to my torn heart  
 There seems no mean, no moderate course to run:  
 I must live scorn'd or be a murderer.

*Eva.* This rage can do no good.

*Ami.* Evadne, hear me:

Thou hast ta'en an oath, which in itself is sin—  
 That I'll forgive—freely forgive thee all,  
 That can forgiven be:—say but, thou art not—

*Eva.* Why shouldst thou pursue

A question, that resolv'd makes only sure,  
 What known thou'dst wish to doubt?—Why dost  
 thou gaze

Upon me, as thy starting eyes would pierce  
 My soul's dark depths?—Is it not enough  
 To know, I love thee not?—The fate, that yokes  
 me

With thy humbler spirit, can lay no thrall upon  
 My sovereign will; my heart defies all bondage.  
 I love with my ambition, not my eyes.—  
 Be school'd, Amintor:—When pain's all the fruit  
 The tree of knowledge bears, who but the fool  
 Would reach his hand to pluck?—I've told thee all  
 Imports thee know,—and warn thee seek no fur-  
 ther.

[*Exit, L.*]

*Ami.* Have I my reason?—'Twas Evadne spoke!  
 Melantius' sister—my wife—new wedded—  
 Gracious gods! what am I?—What dread mystery,  
 What secret of disgrace, and death, and horror  
 Lies underneath her words!—Oh, man! vain man!  
 That trusts out all his reputation  
 To rest upon the weak and yielding hand  
 Of feeble woman!—It is Heaven's justice!  
 The faithless sin, I made,—weak, credulous fool!—  
 To fair Aspatia, now is well reveng'd:  
 It follows me.—But I will know the worst,  
 E'en though to know it goad me into murder,  
 And my own death should follow!—'Tis my fame,  
 And honour, both enforce me to it; I  
 Have never disobeyed them.—She shall speak.

[*Exit, L.*]

### ACT III.

SCENE I.—A hall in Amintor's palace, with door in  
 R. flat. A chair on each side.

*Enter MELANTIUS and DIPHILUS, L.*

*Mel.* It sounds incredibly!

*Dip.* You would have trusted  
 Me once?

*Mel.* And will still, where I may with justice  
 To the world;—but to believe such actions  
 In my king were treason to him. Heard you not  
 Dion say, that even now Lord Strato bears  
 To Amintor and our dear Evadne

His royal master's greetings?—A love like his,  
 So prodigal of goodness, can no alliance hold  
 With lust and cruelty:—No more—thou'lt anger  
 me. (*Crosses to L.*)

*Dip.* Not for the truth, Melantius; and men's  
 lives

And ladies' blighted names can vouch the history,  
 Thou'rt loath to hear.



Mel. I must not hear it.  
Licentiousness, oppression, murder!—'tis  
A monster, that, thou paint'st! (*Strato enters from  
door in flat, R.*) The name of king,  
Though it bore thunder, should not stay my fury,  
Were this true, from throwing on him the stain  
And fate of tyranny,

Str. (*Coming down c.*) You speak loud,  
If you talk secrets, sir—

Mel. My speech requires  
Your comment and attention, lord, as little  
As it fears your kind report. Listeners are  
Ever babblers.

Str. Boldness becomes you, but 'twere well  
To treasure it 'gainst a time of need—(*Crosses, to  
L.*) another  
Visitor is on his way;—farewell!

[*Exit Strato, L.*]

Dip. Shall I  
Not silence him! (*Touching his sword.*)

Mel. Be patient, boy; he has  
No power to wound my honesty:—see who  
approach?

*Enter CLEON, DIAGORAS, lords, &c.*

Cle. Is not the bridegroom here?—Good day,  
Melantius!

Our love would pay the customary greetings  
To Amintor and your sister.

Mel. Our errand was the same;  
I'll seek them for you.

[*Exit Melantius, R.*]

Cle. Are we too early?

Dip. No: Lord Strato, whom you met, had  
borne

E'en now saluting and congratulations  
From the king, precursors of his presence here  
Unto Amintor.

*Enter AMINTOR door in flat, R.*

Cle. From the king!—he rains  
His royal favours on him; 'tis his love,  
That weighs Amintor's virtues

Dia. See, the bridegroom!

All. Joy to Amintor!

Ami. Who's there?—my brother!

Dip. Yes;

Come with the worn-out wish, that every day  
Be blither than the last.—

Ami. Amen! amen! (*Crosses to L.*)

Cle. It makes men happier to think you happy,  
And, most of all, your friends, who tell you so.

Ami. You are all welcome:—come—shall we be  
merry?

Dip. You do no not look as you were so disposed.  
You are ill, Amintor—your eyes are heavy—  
Ami. 'Tis true!

*Enter MELANTIUS, R.*

Mel. (*Crosses to him.*) Good day, Amintor: for  
to me the name  
Of brother is too distant: we are friends,  
And that is nearer.

Ami. Dear Melantius!  
Let me behold thee.—Is it possible?

Mel. What sudden gaze is this?

Ami. 'Tis wondrous strange!

Mel. Why does thine eye desire so strict a view,  
Of that it knows so well?—There's nothing here,  
That is not thine.

Ami. I wonder much, Melantius,  
To see these noble looks, that make me think

How virtuous thou art! And on the sudden  
'Tis strange to me, thou shouldst have worth and  
honour;

And not be base, and false, and treacherous—

Mel. Stay, stay, my friend:

I fear this sound will not become our loves.

Ami. Oh, mistake me not:

I know thee to be full of all those deeds,  
That we frail man call good.—Yet by the course  
Of nature, thou shouldst be as quickly changed  
As are the winds—Oh, how near am I

To utter my sick thoughts! (*Aside.*)

Mel. But why, my friend, should I be so by  
nature?

Ami. I've wed thy sister, who hath virtuous  
thoughts

Enough for one whole family; and it is strange,  
That you should feel no want.

Mel. Believe me, this compliment's too cunning  
for me!

*EVADNE without, R. U. E.*

Where is my lord?

Ami. Evadne!—Come, my love;

*Enter EVADNE, door in flat, R.*

Your brothers do attend to wish you joy.

(*Evadne between Diphilus and Melantius.*)

Mel. Good-morrow, sister! He, that under-  
stands

Whom you have wed, need not to wish you joy!  
You have enough;—take heed, you be not  
proud.

Dip. Sister! have you no ear for my good-mor-  
row?

It shall be merrier, and full as true  
As our grave brother's.

Eva. Dear Diphilus, love's smiles  
Are ever earnest of its truth, speaking  
More pleasantly than sober words, that oft  
Beguile us. Your mirth shall have its audience,  
With thanks in recompense.

Cle. Lady, if wishes  
Could prolong your happiness, it would outlive  
All time.

Eva. Your goodness tasks our gratitude  
To pay thanks worthy of it.

(*Amintor has gone in melancholy ab-  
straction, round the stage, and sunk  
into chair. R., Melantius follows  
him.*)

Mel. Amintor!

Ami. Ha!

Mel. Thou'rt sad.

Ami. Who, I?—I thank you for that.—Shall  
Diphilus, thou

And I sing?

Mel. How?

Ami. Prithee let's.

Mel. Nay, that's too much the other way.

Ami. I am so lightened with my happiness!  
Gentlemen!

Would you had all such wives, and all the world,  
That I might be no wonder! You're all sad.—  
What, do you envy me? I walk, methinks,  
On water, and ne'er sink, I am so light.

Mel. 'Tis well you are so.

Ami. Well? How can I be other, when she looks  
thus?

Is there no music there? Let's dance.

Mel. Why this is strange, Amintor!

*Ami.* I do not know myself.

(Crosses to L.)

*Eva.* Amintor, hark! (*Aside.*)

You do it scurvily;—'twill be perceived.

(*Evadne goes up stage attended by all the lords.*)

*Cle.* My lord, the king is here.

Enter KING, LYSIPPUS, and STRATO.

*Ami.* Where?

(*Crosses to R., and throws himself into a chair.*)

*Dia.* And his brother.

*King.* Good-morrow, all!

Amintor, joy on joy fall thick upon you!

(*Amintor starts up and supports himself by the chair.*)

Madame, I salute you; you're now another's,

And therein twice the object of our care.

Ha! Melantius!

Whispers have reach'd us, casting doubts, Melantius,

Upon a trusted subject's faith;—you can conceive

My meaning easily; for men that are in fault,

Can subtly apprehend, when others aim

At what they do amiss. But I forgive

Freely before this man.

*Mel.* I cannot tell

What 'tis you mean;—but I am apt enough

Rudely to thrust into an ignorant fault;—

But let me know it; happily 'tis nought

But misconstruction; and where I am clear,

'Twill not take forgiveness from high Heaven,

Much less from you.

*King.* Nay, if you stand so stiff

I shall call back my mercy.

*Mel.* I want smoothness

To thank a man for pardoning of a crime

I never knew.

*King.* Not to instruct your knowledge, but, to show you

My ears are everywhere, you called me tyrant,

And even menac'd me.

*Mel.* Pardon me, sir;—

My bluntness will be pardon'd:—You preserve

A race of idle people here about you—

Facers and talkers—to defame the worth

Of those that do things worthily;—

(*Strato comes down R.*)

And if I thought you gave a faith to them,

The plainness of my nature would speak more.

*Str.* Why didst thou not before me say thus much?

*Mel.* Oh, then it comes from him?

*Str.* Who should it come from?

*Mel.* I talk not to him;—

Should the vile tales of such an abject thing,

A cringing, gabbling, eaves-dropper, make a breach

Between your majesty and me? 'Twas wrong

To hearken to him; but to credit him,

At least as much as I have power to bear.—

I have bestow'd

My careless blood with you, and should be loth

To think an action, that would make me lose

That, and my thanks too. When I was a boy,

I thrust myself into my country's cause.

And did a deed, that pluck'd five years from time,

And styl'd me man, then. My heart

And limbs are still the same; my will as great

To do you service. Let me not be paid

With such unkind distrust.

*King.* Let me take thee

To my arms, Melantius, and believe

Thou art, as thou deserv'st to be, my friend

Still, and for ever.—Amintor (*Crosses to him.*)

cheer thee

Thou art still a bridegroom, and we must use thee so.

You will trust me, will you not, to choose

A wife for you again.

*Ami.* No, never, sir!

*King.* Why—like you this so ill?

*Ami.* So well I like her;—

And if the powers,

That rule us, please to call her first away,

Without pride spoke, this world holds not a wife

Worthy to take her room.

For this I bow my knee in thanks to you,

And lift my hands in prayer, in grateful prayer,

To heaven—

From the deep workings of an o'er-fraught heart

Imploring strict remembrance in its justice

Of all your bounty gives me, and, at its chosen

Time, that 'twill repay the debt I owe you,

Which my life, though stretched through countless ages,

Cannot clear.

*King.* I do not like this;—

All forbear the room, but you, Amintor.

(*Exeunt Strato, L., the other lords through door in flat, R.*)

I have some speech with you,

Which may concern you after living well.

*Ami.* He will not tell me, that he has disgraced me! (*Aside.*)

If he do, something heavenly stay my heart,

For I shall be apt to thrust this hand of mine

To acts unlawful.

*King.* Amintor—something lurks

Beneath your words.—do you suspect me?

*Ami.* Sir?—

Suspect you?

*King.* You would suffer me to talk

With fair Evadne, nor have a jealous pang?

*Ami.* (*After a pause.*) I will not lose a word

On that vile woman. But to you, my king,—

The anguish of my soul thrusts out this truth,

You are a tyrant!

*King.* How, sir!

*Ami.* You that can know to wrong, should know how men

Must right themselves: What punishment is due

From me to him, that shall abuse my bed?

Is it not death?

*King.* Draw not thy sword; thou know'st I cannot fear

A subject's hand.

*Ami.* As you are mere man,

I dare as easily kill you for this deed,

As you dare think to do it. But there is

Divinity about you, that strikes dead

My rising passions.—Good, my lord the king,

Be silent on it.

*King.* Thou mayst live, Amintor,

Free as thy king, if thou but turn thine eyes

Away—

*Ami.* A pander?—Hold, my breast!—A bitter curse

Seize me, if I forget not all respects

That are religions, on another word

Sounded like that; and thro' a sea of sins

Will wade to my revenge, tho' I should call

Pains here, and after life, upon my soul!



Tempt me no more—my senses will not hold—  
Monster!—Barbarian! I will not listen to thee!

[Exit, R.]

King. His frantic passion satisfies my heart  
Of fair Evadne's truth;—while that is mine  
Let this weak boy rage on! Suspects Melantius  
Aught?—methinks it is a mask, and not his face,  
He shows me. Gods! knew he—sure Amintor  
Hath stronger sense of shame, if not of manhood,  
Than to be herald of his own disgrace!  
If they should plot together!—I'll remove them!  
Take danger by the root, and up with it  
Before it comes to bear! Its noxiousness  
Lies in its baleful fruit. Up with it!—Deep!  
Go deep! Leave not a fibre!—They shall die!  
Amintor and Melantius both shall die!

[Exit, R.]

SCENE II.—A room in Amintor's palace. AMINTOR  
discovered seated at a table, R. ASPATIA disguised  
as a boy, standing near, L.

Asp. Is there no service that my love can learn  
To do you profit? At first I may be awkward,  
But if you deign to teach me, my strong wish  
To please will make all labours easy.

Ami. Gentle youth,  
Leave me; for beholding thee, in voice and look  
So like thy much-wronged sister, my sins  
In their most hideous form stand up before me—  
But 'tis my fate to bear, and bow beneath  
A thousand griefs!

Asp. Are there not some, that I  
Could suffer for you?—send me not from you, sir,  
For a fault of feature only; I'll stay by you,  
If but to weep in silence, when you mourn;  
Or I would lull your sorrows with my lute,  
And sing to you sometimes, or stories tell,  
To win you to a brief forgetfulness  
Of all that now disturbs you.—

Ami. I could believe it was Aspatia spoke!—  
Wouldst do so much, my boy?

Asp. I would do anything to show  
My love:—wander with you in poverty,  
And danger,—bear cold and hunger, venture  
Life itself, and smiling lay it down  
To lengthen yours, or make your sufferings  
E'en by one sigh the less.

Ami. I am not worth  
Such loyalty, kind youth; tho' I must love  
Thee for it; and for Aspatia's sake will ever  
Cherish thee.

(Rising and apart.) Why should I be thus  
wretched?

For aught I know, all husbands are like me;  
And every one I talk with of his wife,  
Is but a vain dissemler of his woes,  
As I am.—Would I knew it! for the rareness  
Afflicts me now.—But let me bear my griefs  
Hid from the world, that no man's eye perceive  
My inward misery.—Oh!

(Throwing himself into chair, R.)

Enter MELANTIUS, L.

Mel. I'll know the cause of all Amintor's griefs,  
Or friendship shall beidle. His distracted carriage  
Takes deeply on me; I will find the cause.

I fear his conscience cries, he wronged Aspatia.

Ami. Who's there?—my friend!

Mel. Amintor, we have not

Enjoyed our friendship o' late, for we were wont  
To change our souls in talk.

Ami. Melantius, I

Can tell thee a good jest of Strato and  
A lady, the other day.

Mel. How was't?

Ami. Why, such

An odd one

Mel. (Crosses to R.) Leave us good youth.

[Exit Aspatia, R.]

I have long'd  
To speak with you, not of an idle jest  
That's forced, but of matter you are bound to utter  
To me.

Ami. What's that, my friend?

Mel. I have observed your words

Fall from your tongue wildly, and all your car-  
riage,

Like one, that strove to show his merry mood,  
When he were ill disposed.—You were not wont  
To put such scorn into your speech; or wear  
Upon your face ridiculous jollity.  
Some sadness sits here, which your cunning would  
Cover over with smiles, and 'twill not be.  
What is it?

Ami. A sadness here!—what cause  
Can fate provide for me, to make me sad?  
And I not lov'd thro' all this isle? The king  
Rains greatness on me; have I not received  
A beauteous lady as my bride, whose heart's  
A prison for all virtue? Are not you  
(Which is above all joys) my constant friend!—  
What sadness can I have?

Mel. You may, Amintor,  
Shape causes to cozen the whole world withal,  
And yourself too; but 'tis not like a friend,  
To hide your soul from me.—'Tis not your nature  
To be thus idle.—I have seen you stand,  
As you were blasted, 'midst of all your mirth:  
Call thrice aloud, and then start, feigning joy  
So coldly!—World, what do I here?—a friend  
Is nothing.—Heavens! I would have told that man  
My secret sins!

Come with a compliment!—I would have have  
fought—

Or told my friend "he lied" ere soothed him so!—  
Out of my bosom! (Crosses to L.)

Ami. But there is nothing—

Mel. Worse and worse!—farewell—

From this time have acquaintance (going L.) but  
no friend!

Ami. Melantius, stay!—you shall know what it  
is.

Mel. See, how you played with friendship! Be  
advised,

How you give cause unto yourself to say,  
You've lost a friend.

Ami. Forgive what I have done;  
For I am so o'ergone with injuries  
Unheard of, that I lose consideration  
Of what I ought to do.—Oh, oh!

Mel. Do not weep,

What is it?—May I once but know the man  
Hath turned my friend thus!

Ami. I had spoke at first  
But that—

Mel. But what?

Ami. I held it most unfit

For you to know.—Faith, do not know it yet.

Mel. Thou seest my love, that will keep company  
With thee in tears; hide nothing then from me:  
For when I know the cause of thy distemper,  
With mine old armour I'll adorn myself,  
My resolution, and cut thro' thy foes  
Unto thy quiet; 'tis I place thy heart



As peaceable as spotless innocence.

What is it?

*Ami.* Why, 'Tis this—let my tears make way awhile.

*Mel.* Punish me strangely, Heaven, if he escape Of life or fame, that brought this youth to this!

*Ami.* Your sister—

*Mel.* Well said.

*Ami.* You will wish't unknown,  
When you have heard it.

*Mel.* No.

*Ami.* Is much to blame,—

And to the King hath given her honour up!

*Mel.* How is this?

Thou art run mad with injury, indeed:  
Thou couldst not utter this else!—speak again,  
For I forgive it freely:—tell thy griefs.—

*Ami.* She's wanton—(I am loath to say the word,  
Though it be true.)

And I the chosen cover of her shame!

*Mel.* Speak yet again, before mine anger grows  
Up, beyond throwing down: what are thy griefs?

*Ami.* By all our friendship, these.

*Mel.* What, am I tame?

After mine actions shall the name of friend  
Blot all our family! and stink the brand  
Of wanton on my sister, unrevenged?—  
My shaking flesh, be thou a witness for me,  
With what unwillingness I go to scourge  
This railer, whom my folly hath called friend!  
I will not take thee basely; thy sword  
Hangs near thy hand; draw it, that I may whip  
Thy rashness to repentance.—Draw thy sword!

*Ami.* Never, never on thee.

*Mel.* Ye gods! he's base

And fearful!—Thou hast a guilty cause.

*Ami.* Thou pleasest me:—much more like this—  
*Mel.* Take then more.

To raise thine anger: 'tis mere cowardice  
Makes thee not draw;—but I will leave thee dead,  
Make thy vile memory loathed, and fix a scandal  
Upon thy name for ever.

*Ami.* No choice is left my honour.

I knew before

'Twould grate your ears; but it was base in you  
To urge a weighty secret from your friend  
And then rage at it.—I shall be at ease  
If I be killed; and if you fall by me,  
I shall not long outlive you. (*Advancing on him.*)

*Mel.* Stay awhile.—

The name of friend is more than family.  
Or all the world besides: I was a fool!—  
Would I had died, ere known  
This sad dishonour! Pardon me, my friend!  
If thou wilt strike, here is a faithful heart,  
Pierce it; for I will never heave my hand  
To thine:—Behold the power thou hast in me!  
I do believe my sister is a wanton!

A leprous one!—put up thy sword, young man!

*Ami.* How should I bear it then, she being so?  
I fear, my friend, that you will lose me shortly;  
And I shall do a foul act on myself,  
Through these disgraces!

*Mel.* Better, half the land  
Were buried quick together. No, Amintor!  
Thou shalt have ease.—Oh, this adult'rous king,  
To wrong me so!

*Ami.* What is it then to me.  
If it be wrong to you?

*Mel.* Why, not so much:  
The credit of our house is thrown away;—  
But from his iron den I'll waken Death,

And hurl him on this king!—My honesty  
Shall steel my sword: and on its horrid point  
I'll wear my cause that shall amaze the eyes  
Of this proud man, and be too glittering  
For him to look on. (*Crosses to R.*)

*Ami.* I have quite undone my fame.

*Mel.* Dry up thy watery eyes;  
And cast a manly look upon my face;  
For nothing is so wild as I, thy friend,  
Till I have freed thee. Still this swelling breast!  
I go thus from thee, and will never cease  
My vengeance, till I find thy heart in peace.

*Ami.* Stay, stay,—

*Mel.* I will to death pursue him with revenge.

*Ami.* Out with thy sword then, and hand in hand  
with me

Rush to the chamber of this hated king,  
And sink him with the weight of all his sins  
To hell for ever.

*Mel.* 'Twere a rash attempt,  
Not to be done with safety. Let our reason  
Plot our revenge, and not your passion.  
You'll overthrow my whole design with madness.

*Ami.* I am mad indeed,  
And know not what I do.—Yet have a care  
Of me in what thou dost.

*Mel.* Why, thinks my friend  
I will forget his honour? or to save  
The bravery of our house, will lose his fame?  
I'll do what worth shall bid me,—and no more.  
*Ami.* 'Faith I'm sick;—and desperately, I hope.  
Yet leaning thus, I feel a kind of ease.

*Mel.* Come, take again your mirth about you.

*Ami.* I shall never do it.

*Mel.* I warrant you.

*Ami.* Thy love—oh wretched!—Ay, thy love,  
Melantius.

Why I have none else.

*Mel.* Be merry then—

Look up—we'll walk together.

Put thine arm here; that shall be well again.

(*Melantius accompanies Amintor off the  
stage L., and immediately returns.*)

This worthy young man may do violence  
Upon himself;—but I have cherish'd him  
To my best power, and sent him smiling from me  
To counterfeit again. Sword, hold thine edge!  
My heart will never fail me. I will wash the stain,  
That rests upon our house, off with his blood.

*Enter DIPHILUS, R.*

Diphilus!—thou comest as sent!

*Dip.* Yonder has been such laughing!

*Mel.* Betwixt whom?

*Dip.* Why, our sister and the king; I thought their  
spleens

Would break; they laugh'd us all out of the  
room.

*Mel.* They must weep, Diphilus,

*Dip.* Must they?

*Mel.* They must.—

Thou art my brother;—and if I did believe  
Thou hadst a base thought, I would rip it out,  
Lie where it durst.

*Dip.* You should not; I would first

Mangle myself, and find it.

*Mel.* That was spoke

According to our strain.—Come, join thy hands  
To mine,

And swear a firmness to what project I  
Shall lay before thee.

*Dip.* You do wrong us both;

People hereafter shall not say, there passed  
A bond, more than our loves, to tie our lives  
And deaths together.

*Mel.* It is as nobly said as I could wish,  
Anon I'll tell you wonders;—we are wrong'd!

*Dip.* But I will tell you now, we'll right our-  
selves!

*Mel.* If thou be'st what thou say'st, we'll, my  
brother!

*This is the night, spite of astronomers,  
To do the deed in, that shall either bring  
Our banished honours home, or create new ones  
In our deaths. Time flies; prepare the armour  
In my house; and whate'er friends you can draw  
to us,*

*Not knowing of the cause, make ready too;  
Then to the port, and bid my trustiest soldiers,  
In secrecy and silence, be prepared  
This night to combat for Melantius' honour,  
Perhaps his safety.—Be swift, yet cautious—  
A word may be our ruin.—Haste, my brother,  
To-night we strike the blow, and day is fast  
Declining; midnight is the hour—remember!  
Haste, Diphilus, the time requires it; haste!*

*[Exit Diphilus, L.]*  
He must die, and his own sin shall strike him!  
My aim can't miss. All that this world calls

happy,  
Shameless tyrant, thou'st pilfer'd from me, but  
I will redeem

The honour thou hast stolen, or escape  
In death the shame on't!—By my revenge I will,  
*[Exit Melantius, R.]*

## ACT IV.

SCENE I. — *A room in Amintor's palace;  
EVADNE on sofa, R., and six ladies standing  
round her, discovered.*

*Eva.* Now, ladies, who has brought a merry  
tale

To wake our laughter?

*Cle.* I should be, madam,  
The merriest here, but I have ne'er a story  
Worth telling at this time.

*Enter MELANTIUS, door c.*

*Mel.* Save you!

*Eva.* Save you, sweet brother!

*Mel.* In my blunt eye

Methinks you look, Evadne—

*Eva.* Come, you would make me blush.

*Mel.* I would, Evadne;—I shall displease my ends  
else.

I would not have your women hear me  
Break into commendation of you;—'Tis not  
seemly.

*Eva.* Go, wait me in the gallery.

*[Exit ladies, door c.]*

Now speak.

*Mel.* I'll lock the door first.

*Eva.* Why?

*Mel.* I will not have your gilded things, that  
dance

In visitation with their Milan skins,

Choke up my business.

*Eva.* *(Rising.)* You are strangely disposed, sir!

*Mel.* Good madam, not to make you merry.

*Eva.* No; if you praise me, it will make me  
sad.

*Mel.* Such a sad commendation I have for you.

*Eva.* Brother, the court has made you witty.

And learn to riddle!

*Mel.* I praise the court for't;

Has it learnt you nothing?

*Eva.* Me?

*Mel.* Ay, Evadne.

*Eva.* Gentle brother!

*Mel.* 'Tis yet in thy repentance, foolish woman,

To make me gentle.—

*Eva.* How is this?

*Mel.* 'Tis base;

And I could blush, at these years, through all

My honour'd scars, to come to such a parley.

*Eva.* This is saucy!

Look you intrude no more! There lies your  
way.

*Mel.* Thou art my way, and I will tread upon  
thee,

'Till I find truth out.

*Eva.* What truth is that you look for?

*Mel.* Thy long lost-honour.—Would the gods had  
set me

Rather to grapple with the plague, or stand  
One of their loudest bolts!—Come, tell me quickly.

*Eva.* I understand you not. *(Crosses to L.)*

*Mel.* Do not play with mine anger; do not,  
wretch!

I come to know that desperate fool, that drew thee  
From thy fair life. Be wise, and lay him open.

*Eva.* Unhand me, and learn manners! Such  
another

Forgetfulness forfeits your life.

*Mel.* Quench me this mighty humour—and then  
tell me—

Whose wanton are you? for you are one, I know  
it.

Let all mine honours perish, but I'll find him,  
Tho' helie lock'd up in thy blood! Be sudden!

*Eva.* Begone!—You are my brother; that's your  
safety.

*Mel.* I'll be a wolf first!—'Tis, to be thy brother,  
An infamy below the sin of coward.

Force my swoll'n heart no further. I would save  
thee.

Thou hast no hope to 'scap!—He that dares  
most,

And damns away his soul to do thee service,  
Will sooner fetch meat from a hungry lion,  
Than come to rescue thee;—thou'st death about  
thee!

Who has undone thy honour—poison'd thy virtue,  
And, of a lovely rose, left thee a canker?

*Eva.* Let me consider. *(Crosses to R.)*

*Mel.* Do—whose child thou wert—

Whose honour thou hast murdered—whose grave  
open'd—

And so pull'd on high heaven, that in its justice  
It must restore him flesh again, and life,

And raise his dry bones to revenge this scandal!

*Eva.* It had better in my mind let them lie still.

*Mel.* Do you raise mirth out of my easiness?—  
Forsake me then all weaknesses of nature,  
That make men women!—Speak, you wanton!  
speak!

Speak truth! *(Drawing his dagger.)*—

Or, by the dear soul of thy sleeping father,  
This steel shall be thy lover!—*(Seizes her.)* Tell, or  
I'll kill thee!

*Eva.* Help! help!—oh! help!

*Mel.* By thy foul self, no human help shall help  
thee,



If thou criest!—When I have kill'd thee—(as I have  
Vow'd to do, if thou confess not) naked,  
As thou hast left thine honour, will I leave thee;  
That on thy branded flesh the world may read  
Thy black shame, and my justice.—Wilt thou bend  
yet?  
(In the struggle Melantius gets to L., she  
on her knees.)

Eva. Yes—yes.

Mel. (Raises her.) Up, and begin your story.

Eva. Oh, I am miserable!

Mel. 'Tis true, thou art!—Speak truth still.

Eva. I have offended:

Noble sir, forgive me.

(Kneels.)

Mel. With what secure slave?

Eva. What shall I do?

Mel. Be true, and make your fault less.

Eva. I dare not tell.

Mel. Do not fall back again:—but speak.

Eva. Will you forgive me then?

Mel. Stay—I must ask

Mine honour first—I've too much foolish nature  
in me—Speak.

Eva. Is there none else here?

Mel. None, but a fearful conscience; that's too  
many

Who is't?

Eva. Oh, hear me gently. It was—the king.

Mel. No more.—My worthy father's and my  
services

Are liberally rewarded. King, I thank thee!

For all my dangers, all my wounds, thou hast paid  
me

In my own metal:—these are soldier's thanks.

(Crosses to L.)

How long have you lived thus, Evadne?

(Raises her.)

Eva. Too long.

Mel. Can you be sorry for your fault?

Eva. Oh! my brother.

Mel. Evadne—thou wilt to thy sin again!

Eva. First to thy grave!

Mel. Would Heaven, thou hadst been so blest!

Dost thou not hate this king now? Prithee hate  
him.

Couldst thou not curse him? I command thee,  
curse him—

Curse, till the heavens hear, and deliver him

To thy just wishes!

Dost thou not feel within thee a brave anger,

That breaks out nobly, and directs thine arm

To kill this base king?

Eva. All the saints forbid it!

Mel. No: all the saints require it; for heav'n  
is

Dishonour'd in him.

Eva. It is too fearful!

Mel. You're valiant in your vice, and bold  
enough

To be a wanton, and have your name of mistress

Discourse for grooms and pages—thus far you

Know no fear.

Eva. Good sir!

Mel. Be wise, and do it. Canst thou live, and  
know

What noble minus shall make thee? see thyself

Found out with every finger—made the shame

Of all successions—and in this great ruin

Thy brother and thy noble husband broken?—

Thou shalt not live thus!—Kneel, and swear to  
help me,

When I shall call thee to it; or by all  
Holy in heaven and earth, thou shalt not live  
To breathe a full hour longer:—not a thought  
Come—'tis a righteous oath. (She kneels.) Give me  
thy hands.

And, both to heaven hold up thus, swear by that  
wealth

This lustful thief stole from thee, when I say it,  
To let his foul soul out.

Eva. Here I swear it:

And all you spirits of abused women

Help me in this performance!

Mel. Enough. (Crosses to L.) This must be known  
to none

But you and me, Evadne:—not to your lord,

'Tho he be wise and noble, and a man

Dares step as far into a worthy action

As the most daring:—ask not why—

(Knock at door c.)

Who's there?

Eva. I know not.

Str. (Without, c., knocking.) Gentle lady—Lady

Evadne,

I am from the king.

Mel. (Unlocks door.) Come in then.—Now

Speak your errand.

STRATO enters, door c.

Str. (Confused.) The Lord Melantius!

Mel. Yes.

Her brother, sir. Well!—You are from the king:

What is his gracious pleasure?

Str. Sir—I—

Mel. Why

Do you pause?

We wait the king's behest.

Str. 'Tis for

The lady's ear alone.

Mel. I am her brother,

Sir; the love that binds us, owns no secret

'Twixt us. No trifling: the king has sent you:

Your errand's to my sister:—well; she's there,—

Waiting your master's will:—speak it, and  
quickly.

Str. Her lord, Amintor, now is with the king,

On matters of some moment, which require

The Lady Evadne's presence: 'tis his highness'

Will she attend him at the palace.

Mel. Sir, it is

An honour

She'll study to deserve;—obedience is

Our duty.

[Exit Strato, door c.]

Yes, obedience to the voice

Of all-commanding justice!

Eva. Oh, my brother,

Let me not go—

Mel. 'Tis not my purpose: thou

Must stay awhile; the villain lied, Amintor

Is not there. The hour may come, when  
brothers,

Husband, friend, will be but names, echoing

Thy frantic shrieks.—There's death abroad!

Evadne, in that hour think upon me:—

Think on thy wrongs committed and endured:

Remember, thou hast sworn—and let this token,

The sacred legacy of murdered honour,

Absolve thee of thy oath to Heaven and me!

(Giving a dagger.)

Farewell.

[Exit Melantius, door c.]



Eva. Would I could say so to my black disgraces!

Oh, where have I been all this time? how friended?

That I should lose myself thus desperately, And none in pity show me how I wandered? Now whither must I go? my husband shuns me! My honest brothers must no more endure me. No friend will know me—chaste women blush to see me,

And pointing, as I pass, say—"There, there, behold her,

Look on her, little children; that is she, That handsome lady; mark!"—Oh my sad fortune!

Is this the end I've lived for? There is not In the compass of the light a more unhappy Creature.

Oh, my lord!

*Enter AMINTOR, door c.*

Ami. (R.) How now?

Eva. (L.) My much-abused lord! (Kneels.)

Ami. This cannot be. (He turns from her.)

Eva. I do not kneel to live: I dare not hope it.

The wrongs I did are greater—Ah! look upon me Though I appear with all my faults.

Ami. Stand up.

This is a new way to beget more sorrow: Heaven knows I have too much—prithce do not mock me!

Eva. My whole life is so leproous, it infects All my repentance.—I do not fall here To shadow, by dissembling, with my tears, Or to make less, my lord, what my vile will Hath done.—No, I do not.—I do appear The same, the same Evadne, drest in the shames I lived in, and am soul-sick till I have got Your pardon.

Ami. Rise, Evadne, if this be Serious, I do forgive thee.

Rise, Evadne. (Raises her.) I should have killed thee, but this sweet repentance

Locks up my vengeance. It was fate decreed Our parting. (Crosses to L.) Go, Evadne, and take care

My honour falls no further.

Eva. All the dear joys here, and above hereafter Crown thy fair soul.—Thus I take leave, my lord, And never shall you see the foul Evadne, Till she has tried all honoured means, that may Set her in rest, and wash her stains away.

[*Exit severally, Amintor, L., Evadne, R.*]

SCENE II.—*An apartment in the King's palace, door, L., door c. Table with writing materials, R. V. E., a chair.*

*Enter the KING.*

King. What are our wishes, if contenting them, We mar our own content? What are our pleasures,

If they engender cares? Better they ne'er Were born, than to such progeny give birth!

(Sits down.)

My heart is heavy—sad. Where is Evadne? She'd cheer it—and it would be sad again! (Rises.) Gods, but this darkness of my soul is thick! Why comes Evadne not, to bring me light?

To warm and cheer me? Hark!—It must be she; Come on my sun! Rise on me! Leave me not

Longer to brood on this oppressive night, Which looks as tho' 'twould never pass away! 'Tis she!—Come in! Why do you knock?—Come in! (Knocking at door, L.)

What kept you? I have wanted you!

*Enter MELANTIUS, door L.*

Mel. (L.) I'm come!

King. (R.) Melantius!

Mel. If Melantius knows his name! Who knoweth not things as familiar quite, So time has metamorphos'd them.

King. This calm

(Aside.)

Is anything but true!—a quiet sea Beneath a lowering sky—not to be trusted! There's storm above, tho' not a wave below, As yet—as yet! I'm glad my guards are near 'Twas seasonable foresight.—Well, Melantius!

Mel. Well?

King. What's your pleasure?

Mel. What is yours?—I think

You said, when I came in, that I was late— That you had wanted me.

King. It was not you,

Melantius, whom I wanted.

Mel. No! whom, then?

King. I said, it was not you.

Mel. I say, whom, then?

King. Is it your business?

Mel. Nay, that's known to you,

Who know the business.—Is't my business?

King. No!

Mel. Why, then, suppose it not.

King. What brings you here?

Mel. Business of yours and mine.

King. 'Tis not a time!

Mel. It is a pressing suit.

King. 'Tis not a time!

Mel. What if it be a wretch,

Whom, save a god, none but a king can help!

King. 'Tis not a time?

Mel. It is a time, sir king!

When mercy's to be shown or justice done, To every man, and most of all a king, It always is a time!—That is, at least, It should be so.

King. You have been revelling!—Wine, Melantius, drowns your proper self in you, And makes you seem another man.

Mel. Not so.

In wine I am two Melantiuses. I'm twice As generous, honest, brave. Say, when I'm sober I'd not take fifty ducats, did you ask me To do a base deed, then I would not do it For a hundred! Not myself, when I'm in wine! In wine men ever are themselves! There's not That vice, how cunningly so'er wrapp'd up, But you will find the goblet will unlock it. How show you in your cups?

King. By your account, I must seem twice a king.

Mel. Or twice a fiend.

King. How?

Mel. What's amiss? Why start you and change colour?

I did not say that you were not a king; Tho' men there are as bold.—Just now I sat In company with one,—which brought me here.

King. Why, what fell out?

Mel. He laid to your account, Most mighty king, unking-like practices.

King. Who was he?

*Mel.* Acts so much o' the vein of hell,  
That twenty demons could not worse complot!

*King.* Who was he?

*Mel.* Such excess of vile offence,  
The vilest grade of human trespass yet  
Looks down upon it!—As you were my king—  
As I had serv'd you from my prime of youth—  
My choicest years on your account laid out,—  
As for you I had borne captivity,  
And shed my blood,—as here a proof or two  
Without a tongue can vouch,—As I had borne  
Your banner long, before your enemies,—  
Most times in triumph, without honour never—  
As I had served you much from sense of duty,  
Belief of merit more, but most of all—  
From love—when such aspersion on your name  
Fell like a blight upon a goodly tree,  
All blossom—I did feel a wish—

*King.* What was't?

*Mel.* To smite!

*King.* Whom?

*Mel.* Thee, that gav'st a subject cause—  
A man thou'rt born above—whose knee, arm,  
blood

Thou hast a right to claim—who gav'st to such,  
Right to disparage thee!

*King.* Right!

*Mel.* Right—thou vile  
And self-debauched king!  
Whom look'dst thou for  
When I came in? For Whom look'dst thou for, I  
say?

*King.* How dar'st thou ask?

*Mel.* Have I no right to know?

Thou damned pestilence, that tak'st not one,  
But twenty at a swoop!

*King.* Audacious man!

Where's thy allegiance?

*Mel.* Where's Evadne's honour?

My sister! Where's her honour, which I left  
One crystal, without cloud, flaw, speck? Yea,  
more,

A diamond for its weight, and starry fire,  
The richest of the brood! I thought it safe.  
I left it so: and, pleas'd at my return,  
Beheld her give it, as I thought, to young  
Amintor's keeping. But she cheated him;  
Gave him the empty casket, and confess'd  
A thief had got the gem—dishonouring him,  
Beyond all parallel; disgracing me,  
New, in my hard-worn laurels; by the name  
Of her proud father writing such a word  
As blasts his son, to look upon that name;  
Imputing nature to her mother's womb,  
Which, ere it should have owned, that saint had  
bless'd

Heaven for the curse of barrenness; and blotting  
The bright escutcheons of as clear a race  
As ere your kingdom boasted, that no herald,  
Howe'er so cunning in his shining art,  
Can make them what they were. This—this, sir  
king,

This hath my sister done! Palm'd off herself  
As a rich bride, fit for my friend to wed,  
When all she had was stolen. This she confess'd!  
And, when I did demand of her the thief,  
That I might glut a brother's vengeance on him,  
She said that thou wast he!—Felons must die!  
It is the law.

(Drawing his sword and rushing on him.)

*King.* Would'st kill me?

*Mel.* Ay! thou monster.

*King.* Traitor, hold!

*Mel.* (After a pause.) Lo! king; the man whom  
thou hast

Foully wrong'd.

There dost thou kneel, at sight of whom my blood,  
Polluted in its richest channels by thee,  
Doth run a stream of fire—there dost thou kneel!  
The space between my weapon and thy heart  
Is traversed in a moment—less—and yet  
I cannot take thy life, but as a soldier.

Where is thy weapon?—Is it in the room?

*King.* It is.

*Mel.* Then get it—haste.

*King* (Going to the door, c.) What ho! there;  
treason.

*Mel.* (Rushing after him.) Nay, then—

Enter STRATO and guards, door c., they seize  
MELANTIUS and bear him back, l.

*King.* My guards—seize him. How stand we  
now?

To whom belongs it now to sue? Kneel thou:

*Mel.* (L.) Not though the block were there. Lo!  
there's the sword

I ne'er shall wear again; that ne'er knew spot,  
Till in a tyrant's heart, I tried, but failed  
To sheathe it.

*King.* (C.) You do hear—to prison with him!

*Mel.* And to the rack with thee! the bed, where  
groans,

And not repose awaits thee. I defy thee!

[Melantius dragged off, guarded, l. s. e.]

*King.* (To Strato.) Stay you, and wait a mo-  
ment.

(Goes up to table, r., and writes.)

*Str.* (R.) Thou hast run

Thy course, Melantius—in the king's eye I read  
The warrant of thy death.

*King.* Here, sir. (Gives him a paper.) Despatch:

Straight to the prison, and deliver this  
With your own hand—'tis for the governor,  
Whom see, despite all lot—despatch, I say.

[Exit Strato, E. L.]

My mind's at ease—Melantius dies to-night.

[Exit King, door E.]

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—The antechamber, with an opening in  
l. flat, leading to the King's bedchamber. An  
open window in R. flat. A door, R. A lamp  
burning.

Enter EVADNE, pale, and with a fixed look, and  
STRATO, door, R.

*Eva.* Did you not say—my thoughts were wan-  
dering, as

We passed along.—You saw him chained?

*Str.* I did,

Lady: mine was the office to guard him to  
His dungeon.

*Eva.* Did Diphilus, my brother,  
Bear him company?

*Str.* He is not to be found

Throughout the city: fresh missives were on foot  
To seek him out, when, on a gentler embassy  
Despatched, I came to lead you hither.

*Eva.* Has the king retired to rest?

*Str.* Madam, an hour  
ago.



Eva. What is the time?

Str. Near midnight,  
Madam.

Eva. Give me the key, sir, and let no one  
Be near;—'tis the King's will.

Str. (*Giving the key.*) Your will  
Is ever his; to know is to obey it.  
I will dismiss the officers who wait.  
Madam, good-night.

[Exit, door, R.]

Eva. I thank you, sir; good night!

(*Evadne locks the door after him.*)

The night grows horrible, and all around me  
Like my black purpose.—Hush!—I feel a stark  
Affrighted motion in my blood!—I am  
Prepared and resolute to meet the fears  
That death can bring; and yet *would it were done!*  
I could almost believe my guilty soul  
Breathed out a gloom around me, and diffused  
A sickening vapour through the wholesome air,  
Dimming the blessed lights above me.—Oh!  
The conscience of a lost virgin! whither wilt thou  
pull me?

To what things, dismal as the depths of hell,  
Wilt thou provoke me?—Let no woman dare  
From this hour, be disloyal!—'Tis so many sins  
An age cannot repent 'em; and so great  
The heavens want mercy for; yet I must through  
'em;

I have begun a slaughter on my honour,  
And I must end it—*there!* (*Listens at the opening  
in flat L.*)—He sleeps!—good heavens!

Why give you peace to this intemperate breast,  
That hath so long transgressed you?  
I cannot hear him breathe!—He sleeps, as if  
He meant to wake no more;—would it were so!  
But then my punishment might seem too light  
For my o'erweighing sin. The powers above  
Make us a great example of their justice  
To all ensu'ing eyes.—Hark?—did he wake?  
No—no.—The grave is not more still.—I must  
Be sudden.—The oath is yet unanswered  
On my soul; and, while I pause, in fearful'st peril  
Stands Melantius' life. (*Seizes the lamp.*) A moment  
lost

May be too late!—Now—now!

[Exit Evadne through opening in flat L.]

SCENE II.—A prison. A door in C. Lamp burning,  
suspended from the ceiling. Melantius in chains,  
pacing the prison.

Mel. Meet death as you would meet an enemy,  
Bravely, with gallant cheer.—Once your account  
With gentle heaven's made up. To crouch be-  
neath

Calamity, is to play slave to fortune, whose control  
The noble still contemn. Then, what's a spasm,  
A shoot of pain, a minute's lack of breath,  
To die in a good cause? But the shame! That  
men

Should say he perished on a scaffold! What  
Imports it, where a man may die, whose life  
Has been above disgrace! My heavy fate!  
For hard it is in prime of life and fame  
At once to be cut off.—Come when it may  
Or, how it may, I'll meet with lightsome heart,  
As it becoms a man!

Enter ARCHAS, the jailor, door C., and four more,  
who remain near the door on R.

Jai. You're lonesome, sir.  
And here are two or three I've brought to you  
To keep you company. (*Retiring.*)

Mel. (L.) Who are they, Jailor?  
(*Brings him back.*)

Why don't you answer me? What is't o'clock?

Jai. (C.) Past twelve.

Mel. What timely visitors are these  
You bring me, at dead of night, when men  
Should go to sleep?

Jai. Sir,—

Mel. I'm a soldier, friend.

Jai. I know you are.

Mel. Why shrink you, then, to say  
What company is this, you seem with dread  
To leave with me?

Jai. With dread?

Mel. You wonder, sir,

At what you know. You're urgent to be gone.—  
You breathe not freely, yet your lungs are sound;  
You're healthy, and your cheek's of sickly hue:—  
And when you look'd upon me now, it was  
As one, that says, "God help him" in his heart.—  
What are these men? Whence comes it they are  
here?

Was't by your own advice you brought them, or  
Direction of another? Must I needs  
Be solaced with their goodly company?

Jai. They are here by order, sir.

Mel. If that be so,  
Then know I why they're here. Good friend, a  
word.

You'll stay with me? I would have some one by,  
Some human eye to look on what is done.  
'Tis drear to die alone a death like this.

(*Archas turning.*)

What! hast not strength to see, what thou  
should'st find  
I have the strength to bear? Then hie thee  
hence.

Yet one request: I pray a cup of wine;  
And then good night. You go to bring it me?

Jai. I do.

[Exit Archas, door C.]

(*Melantius coolly walks up to the men,  
R., and surveys them.*)

Mel. You have seen service

1st Assas. Yes.

Mel. I know it.

A soldier finds a soldier out. A bold  
And stirring fellow were you; but you lov'd  
Your trade for its worst part. You'd be at home  
At sacking of a town. A dog you were  
Priz'd for his savageness; one, it were well  
None but any enemy came near. Well done;  
You've kept your word.

(*To the Jailor, who enters door, C.*)

Jai. (C.) I would I could do more;  
You are a gallant man, sir. (*Presenting a cup.*)

Mel. (L.) Is it good?

Jai. The king, sir, has not better.

Mel. Damn—no, no!

He is your master. You have shown me grace;  
I'll not give wound to you. Give me the cup.  
You've filled it. Thank you.—Friends, good night  
to you



This is my parting cup, for love of you ;  
I grieve to say we drink no more together.  
Good night to the world! Look, jailor, mark the  
cup;

Come closer to it. Does it tremble?

Jai. No.

Mel. Art sure it does not?

Jai. Sure.

Mel. Look at the liquor, jailor; it is frail,  
And quivers at a breath!—or I mistake,  
'Tis solid, motionless. Look in my face;  
Couldst guess from it, it is not to a feast  
I'm bidden?

Jai. No.

Mel. Remember this, good friend.

And now, good night.

Loth am I, loth to let thee go—but go.

[Exit Jailor, door c.

Come, I shall sell my life. He's welcomest,  
That offers boldest for it. Come, thou dog,  
I fancy thee. Oh, had I but a sword!

Sol. Upon him, all at once, and down with him.  
(They draw their swords.)

All, all at once, I say. Now—

Eva. (Shrieking without.) Open quick, I say.

Mel. My sister's voice!

EVADNE entering with JAILOR, door c.

Eva. (R.) Melantius!

It is not too late.

Remove these men, and straight take off his  
chains.

Jai. (C.) Madam:

Eva. You see! your duty's to obey,  
(Showing a ring.)

And not to question.

Mel. Is it the tyrant's signet?  
(Crosses to Evadne.)

Bloodbounds, your work.

Eva. Melantius, be a man,  
And play not the rash boy. Is it not done?

Jai. Here madam, is the order for his death.  
(Showing warrant.)

Eva. Here's the command that makes it nothing,  
sir.

Unbind him on the instant.

Mel. No.

Eva. Melantius!

Do it, sir.

Mel. Evadne, how is this?

Eva. I say,  
Good brother, peace. Let them unshackle thee,  
Then question. (They unchain him.) Leave us.  
Take these men with thee.

[Exit jailor and the rest, door c.

Mel. Evadne, how is this, I ask again?

How happens it, I see thee mistress here?

How can'st thou by the signet of the king?

Talk not, Evadne, of thy brother's life,

And liberty;—How is it with his honour?

Is that safe? Tell me. Paid'st thou for that  
ring

More than the worth of liberty and life?

Hast thou relaps'd. Look at me. Thou can'st  
meet

Mine eye, and prisoner art to vice no more.

That it should ever have enthrall'd thee! Oh!

Evadne, one so matchless rich as thou wast

Should ne'er have grown so poor! Ay, hang thy  
head,

Thy dowry's gone. Thy jewels, ducats, lands,  
Ten thousand brothers with thy brother's love,  
Could not replace for thee—but, seeing lost,  
Would wish thee too away.

Eva. Thou'dst see me dead!

Hath a swerv'd sister then no use for life?  
And wouldst thou wish to see me dead, Melantius,  
Because, oh, selfish man, thou lov'st thyself  
More than thou lovest me? It is thy pride,  
Thy jealous honour, not thy love for me,  
That wished thy sister dead. Melantius, why  
Wouldst thou refuse thy breast to me, when now  
I threw myself upon it, and  
Wouldst lock thy arms, and drive me shamed  
away,

As thou mine own door had'st shut upon me?

Mel. Sister, this house a tenant hath, to whom  
Thou hast done a wrong so shameful, 'twere a  
shame

If it did open to thee—

Eva. Brother, no!

If tears are peacemakers with Heaven itself.

But earth, in virtue low as Heaven is high,

In pride of virtue toppeth lofty heaven.

Melantius, thou didst ask me now, if more

I paid to save thy life, and set thee free,

Than life and freedom's worth—I did pay more.

Mel. What!

Eva. Ay, change change colour. Clench thy  
hands. Breathe hard,

Let thine eyes start, as from the seats they'd leap.

Set thy lip quivering, as with curses fraught,

More than thy tongue can. I did pay more.

Mel. Wanton!

Eva. A harder word, I prithee.

Mel. Wretch!

Eva. A harder still, my brother

Mel. Murderess!

Eva. Ay, that's the word.

Mel. It fits thee, does it not?

Thy father's, mother's, brother's name; that  
slewest

When thou didst stab thine own.

(Crosses to R.)

Eva. What should I do.

But lall the tyrant? How else set thee free?

Mel. Monster of shame—outshaming shame  
itself!

Eva. What seek'st thou for?

Mel. To make a merit of

Thy act of wantonness!

Eva. What seek'st thou for?

Mel. Pernicious wretch!

Eva. What seek'st thou for, I say?

Mel. For what I know I have not; yet, so  
want,

I can't believe but it is here.

Eva. Thy dagger?

Mel. Yes.

Eva. Thou wouldst kill me? Here is one, my  
brother.

Mel. Give it me—'Tis bloody!

Eva. Is it!

Mel. Reeking yet;

As from a deed new done. Whose gore is it?

The tyrant's? Speak, Evadne.—Hast thou turned

From a lost angel into the wasting spirit

Of retribution? Is it the tyrant's blood?—

Why, sister, dost not speak? and what dost mean

By that unearthly look, as tho' a corpse  
Stood there, and glared upon me!—Powers of  
grace

Thou changest more and more! The little light  
Thine orbs had left, seems gone.—Thy lineament  
Grew sharp!—Their hue, that ashy was before,  
Looks ashy now to that!—Thy frame contracts,  
Like something that was vanishing—substance  
now,

Now air!—My heart is cow'd before thee! where  
'Twas all a conflagration, nothing lives  
But freezing horror now! Speak, speak, Evadne,  
What art thou? Life or death? What art thou?  
Speak.

Eva. A murderess!

Mel. Embrace me.—Smile, my sister!

Eva. Lo, an oblation to thy injured honour!

Mel. It is accepted. Smile, Evadne, smile.

Eva. Nor seemed it yet enough. I saw thee by  
me,

And when I struck, look'd in thy fiery eye,  
To see if thou wast pleased:—'Twas scowling still,  
And seemed to say to me,—“Thou work'st by  
halves,

Evadne. To no purpose dost thou stay  
Thy paramour, if thou remain'st behind,  
Follow the tyrant! Follow him!”

Mel. 'Twas a fiend  
And not thy brother, so commanded!

Eva. Nay, 'twas thyself; thyself, Melantius, as  
Thou look'st that hour upon me, when thy  
poniard,

By thy fierce honour on thy sister drawn,  
Flashed in her face, like light'ning sent from  
heaven,

To strike and melt her sin-encrusted soul!  
“Follow the tyrant,” thou did'st seem to say!  
Nor did I think thee wrong to wish me dead—  
A loathsome worm upon the healthful leaf  
Of thy fair honour feeding!—I resolved  
To do thy bidding, my Melantius!

Mel. No, not for a thousand worlds!

Eva. Thou'dst have me live?

Mel. Ay, my poor sister!—kiss me!

(She sinks into his arms. Distant shouts.)

Enter AMINTOR and ASPATIA wounded, door c.

Ami. My Melantius!

(Coming down, L.)

Hast thou not heard the shout of liberty?  
The city is in arms, thy brother leads the throng!  
The tyrant's dead—slain by some unknown hand,  
Righteously slain! Lysippus is proclaimed,  
And, with a general amnesty begins  
A more auspicious reign!

Eva. Is't not Amintor,

My much wronged husband, speaks

Mel. It is, Evadne.

Eva. Bid him draw near—Amintor, where's thy  
page?

Ami. The boy is here. (Pointing to Aspatia, L.) A  
drop or two of blood

The poorer for his master's sake; my shield  
Against my will; he bravely took a blow  
Intended for my life.

Eva. No boy is he!—The vain disguise ne'er  
blinded me—

That pang;—

Amintor, know Aspatia in thy page

And take her clearance from her enemy.

She never swerved: the tyrant slandered her

To gain his ends with thee.

His dying groans proclaimed her innocence,

And his own guilty practice. I ne'er wronged her.

Ami. Aspatia!

Have I another fault like this to answer?

Eva. Give her thy hand,

When I've released it, which anon, I'll do.

Mel. What mean'st thou, love?

Eva. Melantius, turn thy head,

For I am faint—that I may look on thee.

Turn it full round. I would see all thy face.

My own Melantius! thou'rt my brother still!

Bend thy head towards me. Let me kiss thy  
cheek,

Now this, and now thy forehead, dear Melantius,  
And didst thou say indeed, thou'dst have me live?

Mel. I did, my sister.

Eva. And wouldst thou love me then?

Mel. My dear, dear sister.

Eva. I'd fain deserve thy love. I would not  
live

A blemish in a noble brother's eye,

So swallow'd poison. Brother, I am dying.

Mel. Come, let me bear thee to some place of  
help.

Eva. There is no place for me so fit to die  
As here.

(Shouts, and a flourish without.)

Enter DIPHILUS, LYSIPPUS, CLEON, DION,  
&c., &c., door c.

Dip. (R.) Melantius, thou art free. We are re-  
veng'd.

The king himself comes to unloose thy bonds—  
Evadne!—

Mel. 'Tis too late. I have no thought

For aught on earth but her.

Lean on me, love; come, my Evadne—

Eva. I must rest here;

My strength begins to disobey my will;

I would fain live now, if I could, Melantius;

Would'st thou have loved me then!

Mel. Alas!

All that I am's not worth one thought of thee.

Eva. Give me thy hand:—my hands stretch up  
and down,

And cannot find thee.—Have I thy hand, Melan-  
tius,

Mel. Thou greatest blessing of the world, thou  
hast,—

Eva. I do believe thee better than my sense,

Oh, I must go.—Farewell! (Dies.)

Mel. She swoons!—help here! For Heaven's  
sake, help!

Evadne, speak!—I'll chafe her temples—nothing  
stirs.

Some hidden power tell her Melantius calls,

And let her answer me! Evadne! speak!

Oh, she's gone!

Since out of justice, we must challenge nothing,

I'll call it mercy, if you'll pity me,

Ye heavenly powers! and lend, for some few  
years,

The blessed soul to this fair seat again!

No comfort comes,—the heavens deny me, too!

Evadne!—my Evadne!

Oh, my heart!

Wilt thou not burst at need—'tis this must

Free thee. (Offers to kill himself.)

Ami. My Melantius!

Dip. Hold, brother! (Disarming him.)

Mel. His spirit is but poor, that can be kept

From death for want of weapons. My murdered  
sister,

He, who caused thy death, will ne'er outlive thee.  
My sister! my dear sister!

(Throws himself on the body.)

Ami. My poor friend! Remove the body from him.

Dear Aspatia,  
I will not leave thy truth unrecompensed,  
If a whole life of grateful love can quit it.  
Prince, may this to thee be an example  
To rule with temper. For on lustful kings,

Unlooked-for, sudden deaths from Heaven are sent;

But woe to him that is their instrument!

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